

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /100 W

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R 182058Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5567

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ASUNCION 3276

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UY, SF, AR, BR, UN, PA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER VORSTER

REF: ASUNCION 2509

1. SUMMARY - SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER VORSTER COMPLETED FIVE-DAY STATE VISIT TO PARAGUAY AUGUST 18. BY ALL ACCOUNTS VISIT WAS CONSIDERED SUCCESS BY BOTH COUNTRIES. PRIMARY INTEREST ON PARAGUAYAN SIDE WAS \$11 MILLION IN LOAN AGREEMENTS SIGNED DURING VISIT, TO GO WITH \$10 MILLION IN AID SOUTH AFRICA HAD GIVEN PREVIOUSLY. FOR THEIR PARTY, SOUTH AFRICANS SEEMED TO APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE STATE VISIT AND WERE GRATIFIED BY WARM RECEPTION. END SUMMARY.

1. SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER VORSTER DEPARTED ASUNCION AUGUST 17 AFTER COMPLETING FIVE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO
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PARAGUAY WHICH RETURNS VISIT OF PRESIDENT STROESSNER TO

SOUTH AFRICAN LAST YEAR. ACCOMPANYING PRIME MINISTER WERE FOREIGN MINISTER HILGARD MULLER, SEVERAL FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS, AND OVER 20 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES FROM SOUTH AFRICA. IN ADDITION, ALL SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE GATHERED IN ASUNCION AT SAME TIME FOR CONFERENCE.

2. AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, CEREMONIAL ASPECTS RECEIVED HEAVY EMPHASIS. IN ADDITION TO USUAL EXCHANGE OF DINNERS, WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY, PRESS CONFERENCES, ETC., FACT THAT VISIT COINCIDED WITH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF FOUNDING OF CITY OF ASUNCION--ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT LOCAL HOLIDAYS--PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR COLORFUL MILITARY PARADE AND SPECIAL MASS CELEBRATED BY ARCHBISHOP.

3. LEVEL OF RHETORIC IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF TWO LEADERS WAS HIGH EVEN FOR PARAGUAY. AT ONE POINT PRIME MINISTER VORSTER DESCRIBED PRESIDENT STROESSNER AS "ONE OF THE GREATEST MEN IN THE WORLD . . . A GREAT LEADER OF A GREAT PEOPLE". IN PRESS CONFERENCE VORSTER DENIED THAT HIS VISIT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH GAINING SUPPORT AT UN FOR SOUTH AFRICA, BUT EXPLAINED HIS PRESENCE HERE IN TERMS OF DESIRE FOR CLOSER FRIENDSHIP BASED ON "MANY THINGS IN COMMON".

4. HIGH POINT OF VISIT FOR PARAGUAYAN HOSTS WAS SIGNING OF LOAN AGREEMENTS TOTALING \$11 MILLION FOR VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. THIS IS IN ADDITION TO \$10 MILLION IN LOANS SOUTH AFRICA HAS ALREADY EXTENDED TO PARAGUAY (WHICH INCLUDE FUNDS FOR BUILDING NEW FOREIGN MINISTRY). EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE ARE NO OTHER GOP REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE NOW PENDING, BUT OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT GOP CLEARLY ANTICIPATES ADDITIONAL AID FROM THIS SOURCE.

5. COMMENT: THOUGH LARGELY CEREMONIAL IN CHARACTER, VISIT BY ALL INDICATIONS WAS CONSIDERED GREAT SUCCESS BY BOTH COUNTRIES. GOP WAS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING FINANCING FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS FOR WHICH FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN AVAILABLE FROM OTHER SOURCES, AND IS WILLING IN RETURN TO RISK INTERNATIONAL DISAPPROVAL FOR HOSTING VISIT OF SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER. ON SOUTH AFRICAN SIDE, OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE STATE VISIT WAS OBVIOUSLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPRECIATED. SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR TO PARAGUAY TOLD AMBASSADOR LANDAU THAT SOUTH AFRICANS THOUGHT THE VISIT WENT OFF EXTREMELY WELL AND WERE DELIGHTED BY THEIR WARM AND HOSPITABLE RECEPTION. AS FAR AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, VISIT WAS NOT MARRED BY ANY UNTOWARD INCIDENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ASUNCIO3276
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750285-0458
From: ASUNCION
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750842/aaaabkah.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ASUNCION 2509
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2003 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER VORSTER
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, SF, PA, UY, BR, AR, UN, (VORSTER, BALTHAZAR JOHANNES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006